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A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority

June 1999

Gay Issues, Schools, and the Right-wing Backlash

ERIC ROFES

Across the United States, and not just in urban areas such as New York or Los Angeles, the issue of sexual orientation and schools has become a major controversy. Sometimes, lesbian/gay/bisexual students are at the forefront of the issue. Sometimes, far-right organizations are setting the agenda.

Is anyone "winning" this cultural war? And why have the public schools emerged as such an important battlefield in the fight for the rights of gays and lesbians? Furthermore, how do such issues relate to the broader struggle over the future of public education in this country?

Paradoxical Position

This is a tumultuous time for social justice advocates working on making schools safe for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth and for teachers committed to serving all their students. Never before has so much activity emerged in public schools which challenges educators, school boards, and communities to come to terms with issues which were unimaginable 25 years ago, except in a few key urban centers.

Issues span a broad spectrum: openly

gay and lesbian teachers and principals, out-of-the-closet students who are organizing for their rights, lesbian mothers leading PTAs, explicit sex education and AIDS prevention curricula which deal head-on



Marchers at the 1997 Lesbian and Gay Pride in Boston included many teachers and students. Photo by Ellen Shub

with gay male sexuality. The National Education Association offered a resolution in 1995 supporting Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual History Month. The American Educational Research Association held a special day-long training at its 1996 annual meeting for researchers whose work focuses on gay issues in schools. Courses on anti-homophobia education and gay issues in education pop up at Education Schools such as Berkeley and Harvard.

Yet never before have gay issues in schools been the target of such a multitude of local, statewide, and national efforts by a highly-organized right-wing. In Anchorage, Alaska, the school board was forced to vote on whether a gay/straight alliance might remain active on a high school campus. In Idaho, the state superintendent of public instruction threatened to return \$80,000 in federal funding for HIV/AIDS education, insisting on an "abstinence only" policy. In Modesto, California, anti-gay organizers launched an attack on teachers planning to attend a regional conference on gay issues in schools and insisted that no district funds be used for this kind of staff development.

Uneven Progress

The current political landscape on gay/lesbian school issues feels like a paradox because many of us have been inculcated in a simplistic, linear model of social change. We believe that political organizing has a specific trajectory of wins and losses which eventually culminates in total victory. Yet the past 30 years of organizing in various movements has made it clear that a more dynamic and less predictable pattern of victories and defeats, backlashes, and retreats, surprise gains and disappointing losses are mixed together in the social change stew.

Thus it's not surprising that as gay issues have moved from invisible (1960), to socially marginal (1970), to part of a "liberal agenda" (1980), to a central place in

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mainstream political debate (1990s), the anti-gay right-wing has shifted tactics and re-energized and reinvented its attacks. In the 20 years since Anita Bryant and California Senator John Briggs first brought gay issues in schools into the public debate, both the right-wing and the gay and lesbian movement have increased in sophistication, resources, and organizational know-how. Hence the skirmishes occur with increasingly higher visibility and increasingly higher stakes.

Gay Issues as Wedge Issues

Suzanne Pharr, in her powerful book, *In the Time of the Right: Reflections on Liberation*, argues that the issue of homosexuality "provided a major source of fund raising for the Right's organizations as well as their best vehicle for changing the country's thinking about civil rights." She also notes that homosexuality has effectively functioned as a "wedge" issue.

Pharr shows how homophobia is used to divide and fragment communities of color, "destroy the potential for multi-issue movement building," and allow the right-wing to gain a foothold in new spheres where it can then launch campaigns for its broader and more far-reaching agenda.

The right-wing's attack on public schooling offers one of the best examples of how gay issues are used as a front to amass support in preparation for a larger agenda. It has been relatively easy for right-wing organizers to garner mass support and raise big bucks when gay issues can be fanned into a local sex panic. Skillful organizing by right-wing activists utilizes stereotyping and scapegoating as weapons intended to encourage citizens to channel a range of anxieties and misgivings about their local schools (and even about extraneous non-school issues) into triggering the gay issue.

This has frequently brought about the election of religious right activists to local boards of education, the banning of books and other educational materials, and an escalating public rhetoric of "family values." Yet, once in power, a much broader agenda emerges as the true game plan.

Lesbians and gay men continue to be marginalized and scapegoated, but broader philosophical and pedagogical questions swiftly emerge: elimination of all sex education, opposition to pedagogies intended

to strengthen critical thinking, attacks on the teaching of whole language, considerations of expanded privatization of schooling, challenges to multicultural history units. The right-wing pushes forward to support expanded and deregulated home schooling, voucher initiatives that would include parochial schools, the teaching of creationism rather than evolution, and an exclusive focus on phonics in the teaching of reading.

[G]ay issues are used as a front to amass support in preparation for a larger agenda.

Who's Fighting the Right?

The heroes in the public battles to address lesbian and gay issues in schools tend to be ordinary individuals who stand up to the bigotry and bullying tactics of the right-wing. Most hold a common commitment to public education and a broad understanding of how what is considered "the public" is under constant attack these days.

When a rural New Hampshire school administrator attempted to keep gay-themed books out of high school English classes, she unwisely chose to target Penny Culliton. A heterosexual teacher with tremendous integrity, Culliton believed that gay issues merited examination in the schools. She decided to continue to teach such books, was fired, and successfully fought her dismissal in the courts.

In Wisconsin, meanwhile, when school officials in Ashland spent three years looking the other way as a teenage boy was bullied, and beaten by his peers, they didn't know they were dealing with Jamie Nabozny. With support from his family, Nabozny filed a ground-breaking lawsuit arguing that school officials bear responsibility for ensuring that homosexual students are not subjected to abuse and harassment.

When the Salt Lake City School Board took radical action to keep young gays and lesbians from creating a support group within the schools, they forgot about the Kellie Petersons of the world. A newly

"out" lesbian teenager in the school, Peterson would successfully lobby, protest, and organize to create and sustain such a group and in the process focused national attention on what, until then, had seemed just another local school controversy.

The right-wing argues that there is a vast conspiracy, a unified "gay agenda" aimed at taking over American public schools and recruiting children into homosexuality. But in actuality the flashpoint gay issues which have emerged in schools usually arise spontaneously out of the local context.

The battles usually are waged with little support from formal political and legal organizations. In this way, gay and lesbian issues in schools appear to be following a path quite distinct from that of other groups who have fought for full inclusion in schools.

Throughout the twentieth century, social movements have looked to the public schools as a key institutional site for contestation. Asians and Latinos fought for equal access to education through bilingual and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs. The Civil Rights Move-

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ment spent generations fighting for school integration, culminating in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. The women's movement continues the fight for Title IX and the disabled community struggles aggressively for full inclusion in public school classrooms. While each population often has different histories of, and contexts for, discrimination, these movements seemed to share in a vision of public education as essential to democracy.

The major national lesbian and gay organizations have not taken on public schooling as a primary site for political contestation. Other institutions such as the military and marriage have commanded the greater portion of the community's resources and political action. Only Lambda Legal Defense, the premiere gay and lesbian legal organization, has devoted a staff position to school-related issues. Schools somehow seemed off the radar screen, despite decades of case law and the imprint of terror which remained in the memory of many gay people's minds.

A number of organizations maintain some degree of oversight and involvement in these flashpoint battles in the schools (People for the American Way, the Human Rights Campaign, the American Civil Liberties Union, National Organization for Women). Yet only a few organizations have emerged as the leading forces combating the attacks from the right-wing and offering a pro-active progressive agenda for education: the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Teachers Network (GLSTN), Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and the National Education Association.

Many have argued that the gay movement's failure to prioritize issues related to public education is rooted in two main facts. First, the movement's leaders hope to avoid providing fodder for stereotypes which portray gays as child molesters; hence, they downplay gay youth issues in the hopes of avoiding charges of "recruitment." Second, many lesbian and gay adults have not come to terms with their own painful childhoods. As a result, issues facing contemporary youth are too close to home to take on.

One might disagree about why gay groups and left-wing organizations have failed to take a formal and significant role in fighting the right-wing on gay issues in



Despite conservative opposition, Gay-Straight Student Alliances, like this one in Brookline, MA, have grown significantly in recent years. Photo by Ellen Shub

schools. Regardless, the reality is that most of the progress on matters such as increased safety for queer youth in schools, acceptance of openly gay school workers, increasing inclusion of lesbian and gay issues in school curricula is occurring as a result of the uncoordinated and often unplanned efforts of fair-minded individuals who maintain a firm commitment to democratic education in an increasingly undemocratic era.

Behind the Classroom Door

Gay and lesbian youth and educators find themselves in a precarious position in the 1990s. More visible and active than ever before, they are clearer targets for an increasingly powerful right-wing. Thus, the examples of school teachers actively addressing homophobia and encouraging full participation by gay parents, youth, and teachers become increasingly important as models of what can be achieved behind the classroom door.

The pressure of the right-wing leads many teachers—gay and non-gay—to avoid dealing with gay and lesbian issues in their classrooms. Is it worth the risk? Teachers engage in self-censorship, side-step sensitive questions, and participate in an elaborate "don't ask, don't tell" game with their students to keep gay issues out of the school's formal curriculum.

Some teachers have approached these issues successfully through the school's commitment to multicultural curricula, it-

self under attack from a right-wing which insists on privileging Western cultures as the centerpiece of a narrative of universal progress. Understanding that multiculturalism might move beyond race/ethnicity to include groups defined by religion (Jews, Sikhs, Moslems) and culture (deaf people, lesbians and gays, poor people), some teachers are valiantly creating rich, radical curricula which truly aim to teach "respect for all."

Heterosexual teachers who seek to become allies with gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities might understand this work as coalition politics in its true and deeper sense. Working to support full participation in the schools might be seen as working on gay and lesbian issues. But it might also be articulated as promoting democracy and standing up to a theocratic, anti-democratic right-wing. While the right consistently explains such efforts as attempts to be "politically correct" or responses to another "whiny minority group," they might more appropriately be seen as efforts to strengthen and affirm the "public" in public education.

Eric Rofes is a longtime community organizer and Visiting Assistant Professor of Education at Bowdoin College in Maine. This article is an excerpt from Rethinking Schools, Volume 11, No. 3 - Spring 1997, which is available on their website: www.rethinkingschools.org.

Carefully Taught and the Culture War

BARBARA BERNSTEIN

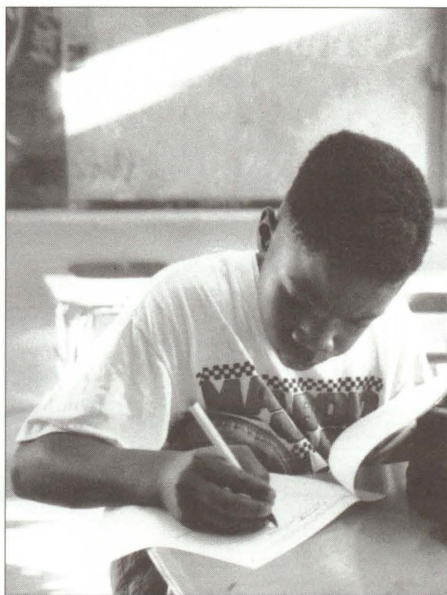
Public education is under attack. Classrooms and school boards are ideological battlegrounds in the so-called culture war. A two-part documentary series, *Carefully Taught: Clashing Values in the Classroom*, was developed by the Media Project to explore the struggles taking shape regarding curricula, funding and vouchers. I helped produce the radio programs, which were designed to help activists gain a fuller understanding of the issues underlying the classroom conflicts.

The documentary features the voices of many of the leading figures and grassroots activists in the cultural war, left and right. Among those interviewed were Holly Sklar, Howard Zinn and Bill Bigelow (author of the "Rethinking Columbus" curriculum), along with ultra-conservative school board members, spokespeople from right-wing think tanks and the chair of the California State Assembly education committee.

Early Warning Signs

I became aware of the need for a project such as *Carefully Taught* when, as a member of the Media Project, I started working in 1992 on a radio documentary about the religious right's attacks on lesbian and gay civil rights in Oregon. Voters in the state faced the extremes of Ballot Measure 9, a ballot initiative that would have amended the state constitution to declare that homosexuality was "abnormal, wrong, immoral and perverse." During the struggle around the ballot measure I got to see the religious right up close in excruciating color, but mainly I was aware of their anti-gay agenda.

In the course of producing a documentary about the ballot initiative, *In Jesus' Name: The Politics of Bigotry*, (which aired on Pacifica in the fall of 1993) I attended a religious right conference sponsored by an organization connected with Focus on the Family. While participants divided their focus between gay bashing and mourning the recent election of Bill Clinton, I took notice of the number of workshops offered about school issues: school vouchers and "choice," sex education and other curricula debates, prayer in the schools, running for school boards. I realized how thoroughly



A Brooklyn high school student takes an exam. Photo: Tom McKitterick, Impact Visuals

the religious right appreciated the importance of taking control of public education and that the battle front of the culture war was swiftly moving into the classroom.

Based upon that experience, I decided to produce *Carefully Taught: Clashing Values in the Classroom*. This two-hour documentary looks both at right-wing attacks on public education and what progressives would consider the wonderful things going on in many classrooms around the country that are the cause for these attacks. The programs focus on several curricular debates: the debate over history and whose history we teach; the debate over multi-cultural curricula and what authentic multi-cultural curricula really look like; the struggle around teaching sex education in public schools; and the controversy over providing positive models of lesbian and gay people in the classroom (including when it is appropriate for a teacher to "come out" to her or his class).

Carefully Taught also looks at the struggle over school funding. This struggle takes several forms. A longtime right-wing tactic has been to shrink the fiscal stream for education by cutting taxes. The tax revolt began in California in 1978 with Proposition 13 and has spread to most of the rest of the country. *Carefully Taught* presents a mother who moved to Portland, Oregon from Oakland, California because the Oak-

land schools had deteriorated so badly as a result of Prop 13, only to find herself fighting a similar anti-tax measure in Oregon.

Carefully Taught also spends some time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the first city to experiment with school vouchers. Here the debate is not as cut and dry as progressives might like it to be. One of the interview subjects, Robert Lowe with Rethinking Schools, states how important it is to understand the utter disrepair of the Milwaukee Public Schools and how the school system is not serving poor children or children of color. In many ways, one could argue, these students would be better off at a decent private school if the tuition were underwritten somehow.

But Lowe also sees the inherent danger in vouchers: "Parental involvement in a voucher system is simply that of a customer who can participate to the extent that a customer can pay for a service. If you view yourself as a consumer your responsibility is only for maximizing your own interest, it's not for being concerned with . . . other children's interest. In the public sector, on the other hand, there's a notion that people are not consumers so much as citizens, and that public schools are fundamental in order to carry out a democratic society. I think that the ultimate trajectory of a voucher notion is that all services can be privatized, that we have no responsibility for other people's children, that we can have a society that's divided into little warrens that are even more stratified by race and class than we have today."

Media as Organizing Tool

Broadcast nationally in 1997 by the Alternative Radio, *Carefully Taught* was picked up by more than 100 radio stations. Cassette copies of these programs helped education activists inform their constituencies about the lies and distortions that the religious right is spreading about public education and the teachers' union.

Carefully Taught tapes have been used by parents' organizations lobbying the State Legislature, the business community and local governments in Oregon to prioritize decent levels of school funding. The Rural Organizing Project, a statewide net-

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work of rural human dignity activists (and a Resist grantee), is using the tapes in their community education projects. One mother in Oregon took the tape to each legislator.

But perhaps the most useful way to use radio programs in political organizing is to play them on the radio. *Carefully Taught* aired on over 100 stations across the country, ranging from large NPR stations to small

rural community stations and college stations. It was heard by hundreds of thousands of people who were educated and alerted to the dangers of a right-wing takeover (and dismantling) of public education. Often progressive activists overlook the power that radio broadcasting has to get out our messages. Community radio is a potent vehicle for social change and it really needs to be both supported and utilized.

Barbara Bernstein is a video and radio producer whose series Carefully Taught received the 1998 NCFB Silver Reel Award. The Media Project received a grant from Resist in 1998 to distribute copies of the documentary to activists. For information, contact the Media Project, PO Box 82777, Portland, OR 97282.

Talking in School With Barbara Miner

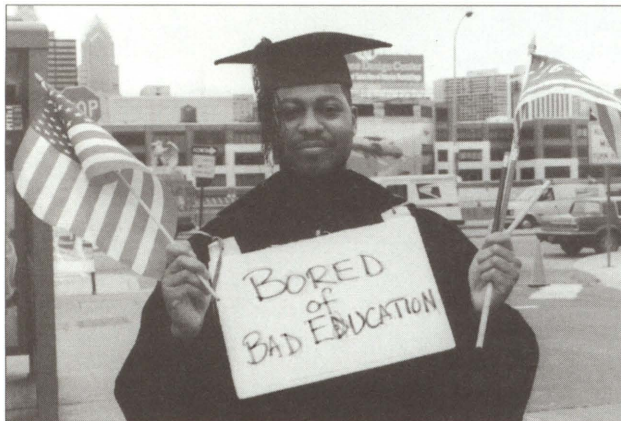
PAM CHAMBERLAIN

Public schools have become a major venue of the culture wars. While progressive educators and parents worked for such things as multicultural education and diversity training, right-wing organizations sought to institute school prayer and abolish bilingual education. Local school boards and administrations battle over the mission and direction of our educational system.

Two of the most recent controversies in education involve the school voucher program and high-stakes standardized testing. Barbara Miner, editor and director of Rethinking Schools in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, discussed these and other educational issues with Resist Board member Pam Chamberlain.

Schools have become a battleground in the culture war. Why do you think this is so?

Miner: At the most fundamental level, people care about our schools. After all, they are the main social institution that remains essentially publicly funded and publicly run. Conservatives and progressives alike have recognized the importance of public schools, and evidence of a culture war is seen in them as a result. People care about who controls the decision-making, the curriculum, the funding, and ultimately the quality of their own kids' education. What has happened is that some conservatives recognize and capitalize on the trend toward privatizing decisions that used to be made on behalf of the public good. These issues are more complex than just privatization. What many of us have overlooked is the importance of race and class in how these battles play out.



A tax day protester in Philadelphia calls for increased funding for education. Photo courtesy of Peace, Justice, Environment Network-Delaware Valley

Many politicians are calling for voucher programs that would make public money available to private institutions. Why is this so-called "choice" option dangerous for public education?

Miner: It's not mere coincidence that the term "private" is so often followed by the phrase, "Keep Out!" Private schools, like private roads and private country clubs, don't have to answer to the public. So private schools get public dollars but do not have to follow the same rules as public schools.

In Milwaukee, 100% of a private school's students can be funded by vouchers. In other words, even without a single student who pays tuition, the school still gets to call itself "private" and operate accordingly. That means (among other things) they don't have to obey the state's open meeting and record laws; they don't have to hire certified teachers or provide special educational services; and they don't have to administer statewide tests.

Vouchers represent a move away from public oversight on educational decisions towards following the rules of the marketplace. There is always a tension between

an individual's right to make decisions that they think are best for their child, and the public's interest in making the best decisions for all children. One of the problems with the marketplace approach is that it completely privileges individualized decision making at the expense of maintaining collective responsibility for educating all children.

The fundamental flaw in the marketplace concept is that it never has, and never

will, honor equity. In fact, school vouchers will further stratify the socio-economic differences that are our society's biggest challenges. The issues are most deeply felt in our urban and rural schools.

Suburban schools are not the focus of voucher campaigns. It's not that our schools are failing. It's that some of our schools are failing, and there are deep inequities among the high achieving and low achieving schools, based on a variety of factors ranging from the resources allotted to those schools to issues of poverty and unemployment in many urban communities.

These are the essential injustices. It is impossible to sidestep the importance of race, especially in urban systems. The quality of a child's education should not be at the whim of geography.

Under the voucher program, could a private school refuse to teach evolution and instead teach only creationism? Or could schools teach that homosexuality is wrong or refuse to provide any sexuality education?

Miner: The legal issues are particularly

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complicated because religious schools can receive vouchers. Under the First Amendment, the government is not to "entangle" itself in the running of religious institutions—which I firmly believe is an important and valuable safeguard protecting religious freedom. The problem is, however, when those institutions receive public funds, it inherently entangles them.

You have two choices. Either they get the money, and there is minimal-to-no accountability to the public. Or they must abide by those same rules as public schools and become entangled. The fundamental issue is: do vouchers set up a duality in which two separate systems operate by different standards but with public dollars—and only one receives public oversight.

Right now, for example, religious schools can legally fire teachers who violate the school's views on religious principles—such as a gay teacher or a teacher who supports the right to an abortion. Will religious schools that receive vouchers also be able to teach that homosexuality is a sin, that creationism is superior to the theory of evolution, that the Jews killed Christ? The controversy will probably land in the courts to decide.

Another movement sweeping through public education is the call for more standardized tests. Many teachers see this as a move backward to the "traditional" educational model. Why do test advocates insist that standards are necessary?

Miner: How students perform in school is a legitimate concern. Everyone wants our schools to do better. The challenge with standardized tests is seeing beyond the legitimate concerns of parents and others. We need to recognize how some conservatives manipulate these concerns and use them for their own ends.

Testing has caught on because many of us really expect schools to do better and want ways to improve what our kids learn. But testing has become a simple answer to what is a very complicated set of issues.

One of these is: who determines the standards that set the curriculum? They seem so old. I remember a line from a Phil Ochs song that my 13- and 14-year-old daughters really like: "And I know that you were younger once, 'cause you sure are older now."

The quality of a child's education should not be at the whim of geography.

Some standards that drive these tests are out of date. They assume a student's job is to collect and remember facts. Instead, students need to learn how to analyze facts, how to evaluate data, how to think critically. They can get their facts from clicking onto Grolier's Encyclopedia in the computer!

Also, the testing issue is at heart a punitive one: do this right or else you'll fail. Students who learn differently, who are bilingual or have learning disabilities, are seen as impediments in the competitive structure. Instead of everyone reaching mastery, we will have many who are branded as failures.

Progressives have been on the losing side of many battles in the schools—from bilingual education to affirmative action. What have we learned?

Miner: We need to practice taking the long view. Seeing what has happened over time is a good way to remember that all is not lost. The success of the right wing these days is because they looked at the schools and realized that *they* were losing, and they got to work. It's a good lesson in continuing to do the work ourselves.

On the ground these issues are a lot more complicated. To do them justice takes much more thought and creativity than the quick answers we have been hearing. And it will take time to demonstrate that truth. Also, we can take heart in the fact that schools are notorious for refusing to abide by top-down mandates of any kind.

What about the issues that are coming down the pike in the next few years?

Miner: It's clear that some of the issues include vouchers, bilingual education, funding equity and standardized testing. It's important to underscore that race is at the heart of many of these issues.

One issue that is not receiving sufficient attention but is absolutely crucial is funding equity. We will never reach consistency in the quality of education unless we find ways to fund our schools more equitably. Poorer schools exist in communities where the resources for all institutions are the

most stressed. I feel we need to look into the issue of funding schools across state lines, of finding ways to insure some stability and equity.

How can progressive activists make a difference in public education?

Miner: We need to realize that schools have become a key battleground in the fight between the left and the right in this country. Historically progressives have not been as active as they should be in school support campaigns. Of course that often changes as we have children and it becomes a personal issue. We should acknowledge the value of that.

My children attend public schools in Milwaukee, and contrary to what some folks think about urban schools, my daughters will come home with stories about what and how they are learning that go so far beyond the opportunities I had.

But beyond the individual story, we need to become more informed about what the broad issues are and how they play out in our own communities and nationally. For instance, I believe any progressive can see that the threat of privatizing schools cuts to the depth of what it means to support public institutions and democratic decision-making. Some days I feel that if the downsizers have their way, they would de-fund every public program except roads and missiles!

We need to look carefully at the real issues behind the education battles. For instance, it's really important to understand why communities of color might support school vouchers. We must learn with those communities what their struggles and resources are. Then it becomes clearer how important it is to develop some shared strategies across class and race lines that have some chance of success.

Pam Chamberlain is a member of Resist's Board and an advocate for authentic education reform. For more information, contact Rethinking Schools, 1001 East Keefe Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53212; www.rethinkingschools.org.

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In addition to the Priority Grants, Resist offers several other funding opportunities. These are listed below. For more information about Resist funding, contact the office at (617)623-5110, or check out our web page: www.resistinc.org.

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Emergency grants of up to \$300 are available on an "as-needed" basis. These grants are designed to help groups respond quickly to unexpected organizing needs. While it is impossible to precisely define an emergency, these grants are generally given to provide support for demonstrations or other events arising from a political crisis. Emergency grants are not intended to provide a safety net for groups who have failed to plan adequately for their financial needs, or who have missed the regular funding deadline.

Accessibility Grants:

RESIST is committed to supporting projects that enable all people to partici-

pate in the movement for social justice. RESIST will fund the additional costs of projects or events which will make them accessible to people with disabilities (such as signers for events, or wheelchair accessible venues) for amounts up to \$2,000. Application procedures are the same as for priority grants. If an organization receives funding for an accessibility project, it may apply again for a different project within the same 12-month period. Decisions on accessibility grants are based on the potential success of the underlying project.

Multi-Year Grant Program

Grantees who have been funded by RESIST *at least two times during the preceding five years* may apply for a multi-year grant. These three-year grants are designed to provide general support. Applicants must: 1) complete the Priority Grant Application; 2) submit answers to the Multi-Year Grant Questionnaire, and 3) be currently eligible to receive grant awards.

Receipt of year two and three of funding under this program will be conditioned upon RESIST's review of specific progress reports each year which: 1) give evidence that the grantee is still engaged in activities comparable to those described in the original general support application; and

2) provide an action plan for meeting the organizations's future goals.

Media Related Grants

As part of its priority grants program, RESIST has funded a wide range of media-related projects and organizations. This stems from the belief that radical use of the media can powerfully impact organizing actions for change. The bottom line for a successful media proposal will be whether the project will be used specifically in the context of a campaign for social change.

RESIST will fund:

- the distribution costs of a film, video or radio project
- the purchase of video or audio equipment on a limited basis
- printing or copying costs for publications
- performances of fully developed plays or skits
- installation costs for exhibits
- general operating costs

RESIST will not support:

- production of films, videos or radio projects
- publications, media, "human interest stories" or cultural projects not directly connected to organizing campaigns
- presentations of film or video projects at film festivals or on public television
- script development
- travel expenses, funding for individuals, or social service projects
- projects originating outside the U.S.

Loans:

RESIST has a revolving loan fund for groups that are planning direct mailings, events, subscription campaigns and other projects that are intended to raise money. Groups can also apply to the RESIST loan fund for advance payments on bus rentals to transport members to marches or rallies. Loans are available in increments of \$500 up to \$2,000. Loan recipients are expected to repay the loan within six months unless a specific agreement has been made to the contrary. Application procedures for loans are the same as for grants. Decisions on loans are based on the potential success of the project, the group's ability to repay the loan, as well as RESIST's stated priorities for grantmaking.

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